# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Rodrekus Dequann Damon, # 319084,		) C/A No. 9:10-0479-HMH-BM
	Plaintiff,	) )
vs.		Report and Recommendation
Ms. A. F. Jackson; A. F. Mcouser,		) ) )
	Defendants.	) )

## Background of this Case

The plaintiff is an inmate at the Kirkland Correctional Institution of the South Carolina Department of Corrections (SCDC). According to the South Carolina Department of Corrections website (www.doc.sc.gov), the plaintiff is serving a six-year sentence for assault and battery with intent to kill. The defendant is a commissary administrator at the Evans Correctional Institution. The plaintiff is not sure of the surname of the defendant, so he has listed two (2) names in the caption of the complaint: A. F. McCouser and A. F. Mcouser.

The "STATEMENT OF CLAIM" portion of the Section 1983 complaint reveals that this civil rights action arises out of the plaintiff's transfer to the Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital, which is on the grounds of the Kirkland Correctional Institution. The plaintiff states:



As defendant Ms. A. F. Jackson and Ms. A. F. Mcouser, had allegedly referred plaintiff to Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital. However, this successful attempt, was enforced after violating plaintiff prison rights. Plaintiff resided at Evans Correctional Institute in the terms of 2007 unto 2008; then was later transferred to Kershaw Correctional Institute, Wateree Correctional Institute. Afterwards, admittance into Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital.

However, the defendant can be located as a residence [sic] of Florence, Darlington, or Hartsville, S.C.

(Complaint, at page 3).

The plaintiff's answers on page 2 of the complaint reveal that the plaintiff did not file a grievance. The plaintiff, however, complained to Dr. Wood at the Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital. As a result, Dr. Wood reduced the plaintiff's medication dosage "until further notice[.]" (Complaint, at page 2).

In his prayer for relief, the plaintiff seeks to be taken off his medication, to receive financial support, and to receive early release based on "time served." The plaintiff states that he would like to be "shipped" to the Darlington County Detention Center or, "[i]f not," the Florence Bus Station.

#### Discussion

Under established local procedure in this judicial district, a careful review has been made of the *pro se* complaint pursuant to the procedural provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 1915, 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, and the Prison Litigation Reform Act. The review has been conducted in light of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(B) and Local Civil Rule 73.02 (DSC), the undersigned is authorized to review such complaints for relief and submit findings and (continued...)



following precedents: Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25 (1992); Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 324-25 (1989); Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519 (1972); Nasim v. Warden, Maryland House of Correction, 64 F.3d 951 (4th Cir. 1995)(en banc); Todd v. Baskerville, 712 F.2d 70 (4th Cir. 1983); Boyce v. Alizaduh, 595 F.2d 948 (4th Cir. 1979) (recognizing the district court's authority to conduct an initial screening of any pro se filing); Loe v. Armistead, 582 F.2d 1291 (4th Cir. 1978); and Gordon v. Leeke, 574 F.2d 1147, 1151 (4th Cir. 1978). The plaintiff is a pro se litigant, and thus his pleadings are accorded liberal construction. See Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89 (2007)(per curiam); Hughes v. Rowe, 449 U.S. 5, 9-10 & n. 7 (1980)(per curiam); and Cruz v. Beto, 405 U.S. 319 (1972).

When a federal court is evaluating a *pro se* complaint or petition, the plaintiff's or petitioner's allegations are assumed to be true. *Fine v. City of New York*, 529 F.2d 70, 74 (2nd Cir. 1975). However, even under this less stringent standard, the § 1983 complaint is subject to summary dismissal. A plaintiff must plead factual content that allows the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is plausibly liable; not merely possibly liable; *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 129 S.Ct. 1937, 1949, 173 L.Ed.2d 868 (2009), which is cited in *Silva v. Spencer*, No. 08-cv-1686-H (LSP), 2009 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 61467, 2009 WL 2160632 (S.D. Cal., July 17, 2009); and the requirement of liberal construction does not mean that the court can ignore a clear failure in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Boyce has been held by some authorities to have been abrogated in part, on other grounds, by Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319 (1989) (insofar as Neitzke establishes that a complaint that fails to state a claim, under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), does not by definition merit sua sponte dismissal under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i) [formerly 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d)], as "frivolous").



<sup>(...</sup>continued) recommendations to the District Court.

the pleading to allege facts which set forth a claim currently cognizable in a federal district court.

Weller v. Department of Social Services, 901 F.2d 387 (4th Cir. 1990).

The plaintiff is not entitled to be confined at the prison of his choice. There is no constitutional right for a state prisoner or federal prisoner to be housed in a particular institution, at particular custody level, or in a particular portion or unit of a correctional institution. *See Olim v. Wakinekona*, 461 U.S. 238 (1983); *Ange v. Paderick*, 521 F.2d 1066 (4th Cir. 1975); and *Lyons v. Clark*, 694 F. Supp. 184, 187 (E.D. Va. 1988) (collecting cases), *affirmed*, 887 F.2d 1080 (4th Cir. 1989)[Table]. In other words, the placement and assignment of inmates into particular institutions or units by state or federal corrections departments are discretionary functions, and are not subject to review *unless* state or federal law places limitations on official discretion. *Hayes v. Thompson*, 726 F.2d 1015, 1016-17 & n.1 (4th Cir. 1984) (collecting cases).

It is known from other cases previously decided in this judicial district that South Carolina law confers no protected liberty interest upon inmates of the South Carolina Department of Corrections from being classified, or being placed in administrative segregation, in a particular prison, or in a particular section of a prison. See, e.g., the order of the Honorable Henry M. Herlong, Jr., United States District Judge, in Keeler v. Pea, 782 F. Supp. 42, 43-44 (D.S.C. 1992), citing Meachum v. Fano, 427 U.S. 215 (1976). See also Vice v. Harvey, 458 F. Supp. 1031, 1034 (D.S.C. 1978). In fact, it is well settled that the placement of inmates into administrative segregation units or similar units is a valid of means of minimizing a "threat to security of the institution, threat to the safety of other residents or Jail staff, etc." Jackson v. Bostick, 760 F. Supp. 524, 528 (D. Md. 1991). See also Hewitt v. Helms, 459 U.S. 460, 468 (1983) ("The transfer of an inmate to less amenable and more restrictive quarters for nonpunitive reasons is well within the terms of confinement ordinarily



contemplated by a prison sentence."); Anderson v. County of Kern, 45 F.3d 1310, 1312 (9th Cir. 1995) (prison officials have legitimate penological interest in administrative segregation, and they must be given "wide-ranging deference" with respect to their need to maintain order, discipline, and "institutional security"); and Montanye v. Haymes, 427 U.S. 236, 242 (1976) (if a prisoner's confinement is within terms of the sentence imposed upon him and does not violate other constitutional provisions, "the Due Process Clause does not in itself subject an inmate's treatment by prison authorities to judicial oversight"). Hence, the plaintiff's transfer to the Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital, which is on the grounds of the Kirkland Correctional Institution, did not violate his federal constitutional rights.<sup>4</sup>

Further, the named defendant (A. F. Jackson or A. F. Mcouser) is obviously not responsible for the administration of medication at the Gilliam Psychiatric Hospital, nor can he order Plaintiff released for "time served". *See Wilson v. Cooper*, 922 F. Supp. 1286, 1293 (N.D. Ill. 1996); and *Campo v. Keane*, 913 F. Supp. 814, 825 & n. 11 (S.D.N.Y. 1996). *See also Horton v. Marovich*, 925 F. Supp. 540, 543 (N.D. Ill. 1996) ("Thus, a plaintiff suing a government official in his individual capacity and therefore seeking to hold the official personally liable must show that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Unrelated portions of the holding in *Hewitt v. Helms* have been superannuated by later case law. This portion of the holding in *Hewitt v. Helms* has not been superannuated by later case law.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>As earlier stated, the plaintiff's answers on page 2 of the complaint show that he did not file a grievance with respect to his prison transfer and forced medication claims in this case. However, Jones v. Bock, 549 U.S. 199 (2007) (failure to exhaust is an affirmative defense and inmates are not required to specially plead or demonstrate exhaustion in their complaints), and cases such as Anderson v. XYZ Correctional Health Services, 407 F.3d 674, 683 (4th Cir. 2005) ("an inmate's failure to exhaust administrative remedies is an affirmative defense to be pleaded and proven by the defendant"), have restricted a district court's ability, upon initial review, to dismiss civil rights actions for failure to exhaust prison or jail remedies.

official personally caused or played a role in causing the deprivation of a federal right."); and *Smith v. Beasley*, Civil Action Nos. 0:07-1641-HFF-BM and 0:07-1642-HFF-BM, 2007 U.S.Dist. LEXIS 54010, 2007 WL 2156632, \*2 (D.S.C., July 25, 2007) (adopting magistrate judge's Report and Recommendation, which cites *Horton v. Marovich*).

### Recommendation

Accordingly, it is recommended that the Court dismiss the above-captioned case without prejudice and without issuance and service of process. See Denton v. Hernandez; Neitzke v. Williams; Brown v. Briscoe, 998 F.2d 201, 202-204 (4th Cir. 1993); 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B) [essentially a redesignation of "old" § 1915(d)]; and 28 U.S.C. § 1915A [as soon as possible after docketing, district courts should review prisoner cases to determine whether they are subject to summary dismissal].

The plaintiff's attention is directed to the Notice on the next page.

March 1, 2010 Charleston, South Carolina

United States Magistrate Judge

## Notice of Right to File Objections to Report and Recommendation

The plaintiff is advised that he may file specific written objections to this Report and Recommendation with the District Judge. Objections must specifically identify the portions of the Report and Recommendation to which objections are made and the basis for such objections. "[I]n the absence of a timely filed objection, a district court need not conduct a de novo review, but instead must 'only satisfy itself that there is no clear error on the face of the record in order to accept the recommendation." Diamond v. Colonial Life & Acc. Ins. Co., 416 F.3d 310 (4th Cir. 2005) (quoting Fed. R. Civ. P. 72 advisory committee's note).

Specific written objections must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the date of service of this Report and Recommendation. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b); see Fed. R. Civ. P. 6(a), (d). Filing by mail pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5 may be accomplished by mailing objections to:

Larry W. Propes, Clerk of Court United States District Court Post Office Box 835 Charleston, South Carolina 29402

Failure to timely file specific written objections to this Report and Recommendation will result in waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of the District Court based upon such Recommendation. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1985); Wright v. Collins, 766 F.2d 841 (4th Cir. 1985); United States v. Schronce, 727 F.2d 91 (4th Cir. 1984).

